

Abraham 2 — Get Thee Out — Terah's Relapse, the Covenant at Haran, and the Convert Accounted as Abraham's Seed

Abraham 2: c. 1995 BC. Departure from Ur; Terah's relapse into idolatry; the full Abrahamic covenant declared (vv. 6-11); the wilderness journey into Canaan; the famine and the descent into Egypt with the sister directive.

Genesis says all the families of the earth will be blessed through Abraham but never quite says HOW. Abraham 2 says how — “with the blessings of the Gospel... even of life eternal” — and gives us, two thousand years before Paul, the idea that anyone who receives the gospel is ACCOUNTED Abraham’s seed. But first it does something quietly devastating: it tells us about Abraham’s father.

Insights

- 1. 2:5 — Terah turned back.** Terah came out of Ur, made it halfway to Haran, and went back to his idols. You can leave Ur with your body and never leave it with your heart. The famine converted the son and only relocated the father.
- 2. 2:10 — accounted his seed.** *As many as receive this Gospel... shall be accounted thy seed.* You become Abraham’s child not by birth but by receiving the gospel — really, on heaven’s books. Paul builds all of Galatians on it (Gal. 3:29). He wasn’t innovating; he was quoting what the Bible dropped.
- 3. 2:11 — the blessing named.** Genesis leaves the blessing vague; Abraham 2 opens the crate: the gospel of Christ, leading to eternal life. The covenant isn’t vague divine favor — it has specific cargo.
- 4. 2:16 — eternity for a roof.** *Eternity was our covering and our rock and our salvation.* A homeless man on a dangerous road names the three things he lacks — roof, ground, safety — and says God supplied all three. You may lose the house; you cannot lose the roof, because the roof is God.
- 5. 2:17 — the intercessor.** Rejected by his father’s idolatry, Abraham builds an altar and prays the famine OFF his father’s house — and the Lord does it. The covenant didn’t make him harder toward his family; it made him their intercessor.

Hebrew Word Studies

shuv / ra'av (שׁוּב / רָעַב) — **to turn / famine, hunger vv. 5-6.** *Shuv*, “to turn,” is the most morally double-edged verb in the Old Testament. Turn toward God and it’s the very word for repentance — “O Israel, return (*shuvah*) unto the LORD thy God” (Hos. 14:1). Turn the other way and it’s the word for apostasy. Same motion, opposite direction. That’s why the text says Terah “turned *again*” — he didn’t invent a new sin, he resumed an old one, pivoting back to the idols he’d briefly walked away from. The chapter is showing you that the covenant can’t be inherited by tagging along. Each soul has to make the turn for itself. And notice the other word, *ra'av*, “famine” — the very thing that drove them out of Ur. In the Old Testament, famine is one of God’s gentlest hard tools: he withholds bread to make the soul go looking for something bread can’t supply. “He suffered thee to hunger... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only” (Deut. 8:3). Abraham let the famine teach him. Terah hid from it in Haran behind his idols. The same hunger that converted the son only relocated the father.

berakhah / mishpachah / besorah / chayyei olam (בְּרָכָה / מִשְׁפָּחָה / בְּסוֹרָה / חַיֵּי עוֹלָם) — **blessing / family, clan / good news, gospel / life eternal vv. 8-11.** Four words trace the covenant’s reach. *Berakhah*, “blessing,” shows up five times in these four verses — the densest cluster of the word in the Bible outside Jacob’s deathbed blessings. *Mishpachah*, “family,” is the scale of the promise: “all the *families* of the earth,” not all the empires or all the kings — the covenant aims at the household-sized unit, the level where faith is actually lived. *Besorah* is “good news,” the exact word behind “gospel” — Isaiah’s “good tidings” on the mountains (Isa. 52:7). And *chayyei olam*, “life of the age,” is “eternal life,” the phrase Daniel uses for the resurrected righteous (Dan. 12:2). Put them in order and you have the whole machine: a *blessing* that reaches every *family* by means of the *gospel* and arrives finally at *eternal life*. The Restoration’s contribution is to name the cargo. Genesis says the families will be blessed; Abraham 2 opens the crate and shows you it’s the gospel of Christ, leading to resurrection — said plainly two millennia before Paul preached it in a synagogue.

olam / tzur / yeshu'ah (עוֹלָם / צֹר / יֵשׁוּעָה) — **eternity / rock, crag / salvation v. 16.** Three Hebrew words, and each one is a quiet wonder. *Olam*, “eternity,” comes from a root meaning “hidden” — eternity is the hidden country of God, and Abraham’s claim is that it was his *covering*, already overhead, not a far-off future but a present roof. *Tzur*, “rock,” is the Old Testament’s favorite name for God — “he is the Rock, his work is perfect” (Deut. 32:4); Isaiah will fuse it with the first word to make “the Rock of Ages,” *tzur olamim* (Isa. 26:4), and you can see that very phrase being lived here in the desert. And *yeshu'ah*,

"salvation," is the word lurking behind the name *Yeshua*, Jesus — and in Hebrew it never means a vague spiritual mood; it means rescue from real danger. So Abraham's eight words aren't poetry for its own sake. A homeless man on a dangerous road is saying: my roof was eternity, my ground was the Rock of Ages, and my safety was the Lord who saves. Helaman would tell his sons the same thing in different words — build "upon the rock of our Redeemer" so that when the devil's winds blow, you cannot fall (Hel. 5:12). Same rock. Same wilderness.

achot / nephesh tichyeh (אָחֻת / נֶפֶשׁ תִּחְיֶה) — **sister / that your soul may live vv. 24-25.** *Achot*, "sister," is the hinge of the whole thing — and it was technically true: Genesis tells us Sarai was Abraham's half-sister, "the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother" (Gen. 20:12). So the statement Abraham was told to make was a defensible truth; the false conclusion (that there was no husband) was the one the Egyptians would draw on their own. And *nephesh tichyeh*, "that your soul may live," is the Old Testament's plain phrase for survival in a deadly spot — Lot uses it fleeing Sodom (Gen. 19:20). The doctrine here is uncomfortable but consistent: scripture repeatedly treats outwitting a murderous tyrant to protect the innocent as permissible — the Hebrew midwives misleading Pharaoh (Ex. 1:19), Rahab hiding the spies (Josh. 2). The Lord adapts to the political reality his servant is walking into. Abraham wasn't sent to convert Pharaoh's court; he was sent to walk through it with the covenant line intact. He'd be preserved *through* hostile power, not *from* it — like Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, Esther in Persia, Nephi in Jerusalem after him.

Apocryphal Correlations — the old books beside the restored text

Jubilees 12. Terah's idolatry, Abraham's prayer to the Creator, his break with the family idol-trade, and the call to leave — the same family rupture. No English until 1888 — unavailable.

Galatians 3 — a CANONICAL witness. Abraham 2's boldest doctrine — the convert "accounted" Abraham's seed, the gospel "preached before unto Abraham" — is confirmed not by an obscure apocryphon but by Paul himself (Gal. 3:7-9, 29). This chapter's strongest witness is canonical, not hidden.

Joshua 24:2 (canon). The Bible's own hook for the relapse: "Terah... served other gods" — the one verse Abraham 2 expands into a full account.

Canon = Moses, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants. Read per D&C 91. An honest note: not every chapter leans on the apocrypha equally. Abraham 2's weight is doctrinal and Pauline — sometimes the best witness isn't an old scroll; it's the apostle Paul.

Where the threads lead

Children of Abraham by faith. Abraham 2:10; Galatians 3:7-9, 29; Romans 4:9-25; 2 Ne. 30:2 — the covenant family is open to the convert of any nation.

The Rock of Ages. Abraham 2:16 (*tzur*); Isaiah 26:4 (*tzur olamim*); Helaman 5:12 — build on the rock of the Redeemer so the devil's winds cannot make you fall.

Turn, and turn again. Abraham 2:5; Hosea 14:1; Ezekiel 18:24 — repentance and apostasy are the same motion, opposite directions; each soul must make the turn itself.

How the chapter changes the reader

Abraham 2 gives the convert a place: whoever receives the gospel is accounted Abraham's seed — really, not metaphorically — so the covenant family was never a bloodline club. And it leaves two images. Terah, who left Ur and kept his idols — the warning that you can change everything about your life except the one thing that matters. And Abraham under the open sky with no walls, saying eternity itself was his covering and the Rock of Ages his ground. That's the whole offer of the covenant: you may lose the house, but the roof is God.